

GUIDE TO COMMUNITY PREVENTIVE SERVICES

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE?

- Science-based advice regarding effective intervention programs is lacking for many public health problems.
- Resources for public health programs are scarce, requiring that the most-effective interventions be implemented.
- With no gold-standard for effective public health interventions, the United States sometimes spends millions on interventions that do not work and fails to fund interventions that could save lives.

WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

In response to the need for information concerning successful ways to improve public health, CDC convened the independent, nonfederal Task Force on Community Preventive Services to examine existing scientific studies and make recommendations. CDC provides scientific support to the Task Force by reviewing thousands of scientific papers to identify relevant studies; evaluating the quality of those studies and summarizing their results; translating evidence into practical recommendations; reporting the findings; and working with diverse partners to ensure implementation of recommended policies and programs. The Task Force findings and recommendations are published in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report Recommendations and Reports* series and the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*; the recommendations are also posted on the Community Guide website. As of September 2003, over 80 published findings have been released, and the Community Guide is increasingly viewed as a population-based counterpart to the *Guide to Clinical Preventive Services* and recognized as the pre-eminent resource for effective information regarding population based-preventive services (e.g.; policies, programs, healthcare systems strategies). The first volume of completed topics will be published by Oxford Press as the *Guide to Community Preventive Services*.

Example of Program in Action

Since 1999, CDC has published findings and recommendations on seven substantial and diverse public health problems: improving vaccination rates, reducing use of tobacco products, reducing motor vehicle occupant injuries, improving the care of persons with diabetes, increasing physical activity, improving oral health, and promoting healthy social environments. The findings have been used by partners at the federal, state, and local levels to improve public health programs and policies. For example, Congress has used the findings and recommendations regarding motor vehicle occupant injuries in its deliberations over reducing allowable blood alcohol limits for drivers. In addition, Blue Cross/Blue Shield and other insurance carriers have used findings to support the addition of tobacco-cessation benefits. In addition, a Community Guide review showing that standing order protocols for influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations for adults are effective in improving vaccination rates led the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services to promote this intervention in Medicare-qualified long-term care facilities.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

- CDC plans to broadly disseminate the *Community Guide* to ensure that information reaches a wide audience including public health professionals, students of public health, legislators, and other policymakers, who will take action to improve public health (e.g., implement public health policies, programs, laws, research, and funding).
- CDC will also conduct a national evaluation to examine the impact of the *Community Guide* and develop additional chapters in the *Community Guide* to address compelling needs for information.

For additional information on this or other CDC programs, visit www.cdc.gov/program

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